

POSTAGE  
REQUIRED



SHIBA *HelpLine*  
Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors  
**LOCAL UNIT - Sponsored by:**

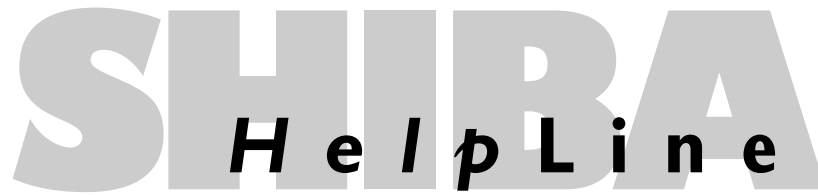
**ATTN: NEW VOLUNTEER APPLICATIONS**

**SHIBA HELPLINE VOLUNTEER**

*Orientation*

*Application*

# *All About Becoming a*



STATEWIDE  
HEALTH  
INSURANCE  
BENEFITS  
ADVISORS

# *Volunteer*



**SHIBA** (Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors) **HELPLINE**

is a statewide network of trained volunteers who educate, assist, and advocate for consumers about their rights and options regarding health insurance and access, so consumers can make informed decisions.

SHIBA has 300-400 volunteers statewide, helping people in their communities understand, choose, and use their health insurance effectively.

Want to join us in helping consumers?  
See inside for more information and signup form.

## WHAT IS THE SHIBA HELPLINE ?

The SHIBA HelpLine is a statewide network of trained volunteers who educate, assist, and advocate for consumers about their rights and options regarding health insurance and access, so consumers can make informed decisions.

The program is sponsored by the Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner. Experts from OIC staff train volunteers and provide ongoing guidance and support. The Commissioner and the agency support and stand behind our volunteers 100 percent.

Consumers' need for health insurance and access information, assistance, advocacy, and referrals increases daily. Volunteers provide free, impartial, confidential attention to those in need.

Clients are served through many channels: seminars, local community training and "clinics," one-on-one counseling, advocacy, publications, Internet, e-mail, videos, and more.

## VOLUNTEERS MAKE IT HAPPEN

SHIBA HelpLine is a satisfying volunteer opportunity for hundreds of people across Washington state. Volunteers are unquestionably the key to this program's success.

**Volunteers can choose** how they want to contribute to their communities. Advisors can be "generalists" who handle a broad range of common concerns, or "specialists" on topics like long-term care, Medicare



billings, managed care, Medicaid, or employment-related benefits, etc. In addition to one-on-one

advising, a volunteer can serve as public speakers, multicultural community liaisons, appeals advocates, or administrative assistants. You may make a long-term commitment or volunteer for a specific project. We will work with you to match your areas of interest with a rewarding volunteer opportunity. Many skills are needed to make SHIBA HelpLine a success.

## WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A SHIBA HELPLINE VOLUNTEER?

Assisting people with health insurance is a rewarding but serious endeavor. Training commitments vary by role (see previous section); the training is most rigorous for counselors. Active SHIBA HelpLine volunteers are required to complete between 2 and 30 hours of initial training, depending on their volunteer role. Additional requirements vary—call us for more information.

Volunteers also typically have an interest in insurance and/or health issues; compassion and a desire to contribute to their communities and the lives of others; and good communication skills.

*All* volunteers must assure be able to assure confidentiality to clients, and *cannot* be affiliated with (i.e., employed by, or in a position to sell) any insurance company, agency, product or service.

## BACKGROUND ON SHIBA HELPLINE

Operating since 1979, this landmark public service has 400 volunteers statewide working through about 25 "units" (local "hubs" for community access to the service). The first of its kind in the nation, SHIBA HelpLine has been the model for other states setting up similar programs.

Already serving 150,000 Washington consumers (and saving them over \$1 million per year), SHIBA HelpLine has a bigger job to do than ever. While the service traditionally targeted pre-retirees, retirees and Medicare beneficiaries, the program has expanded to serve people of all ages. Radical changes in health care are increasing younger consumers' need for education and advocacy.

As we pave the way to meet the latest challenges facing all health insurance consumers and reach deeper into our communities, we'll be helping more people than ever. This means more and varied opportunities for volunteers than ever.

## BE PART OF A WINNING CONSUMER PROTECTION TEAM

**YOU** can help! Get and give the education, advice and referrals needed to make informed choices about health insurance. Sometimes the assistance you give can be potentially life-saving.

If you're interested, use the form at right to apply.

*This publication may have been partially funded by grants from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the U.S. Administration on Aging.*

## VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

# I want to be a SHIBA volunteer! What now?

If you think you may want to be a SHIBA HelpLine volunteer, fill out the form below and mail it to the address on the back. Or call 1-800-39-SHIBA for the address and phone number of the unit nearest you. Make an appointment at the local unit for an interview and orientation session.

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
County \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ *best time to call:* \_\_\_\_\_ day \_\_\_\_\_ evening

Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) HelpLine provides health insurance information via volunteers who are not professionals in the field but are trained by the state Insurance Commissioner's Office; and are acting in good faith, without selling, recommending or endorsing any specific insurance product, agent or company.  
**I am not currently affiliated with any insurance company or agency in any way.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) HelpLine ensures the confidentiality of each client.  
**I pledge to keep confidential the details of each personal consumer interaction.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

### If choosing counseling as your volunteer role/specialty:

Will you attend 30 hours of basic training, plus regular supplemental training?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Will you fill out the paperwork required of a SHIBA volunteer on a regular basis?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO
Is there a special skill or area of knowledge/experience that you hope to apply?	<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO

### Topics and/or populations in which I can/would like to specialize: (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

\_\_\_\_ "Traditional" SHIBA (Retirees/Seniors/Medicare beneficiaries)      \_\_\_\_ ALL AGES/Individual Market/Under-65

### SPECIALTY VOLUNTEER ROLES:

<input type="radio"/> Public Speaking	<input type="radio"/> Administrative	<input type="radio"/> Bills/Forms	<input type="radio"/> Counseling
<input type="radio"/> Medical Bills/Forms	<input type="radio"/> Research	<input type="radio"/> Advocacy/Appeals	<input type="radio"/> Computer/Web

### SPECIALTY TOPICS:

<input type="radio"/> Long-Term Care	<input type="radio"/> Fraud/Abuse	<input type="radio"/> Medicaid	<input type="radio"/> Basic Health
<input type="radio"/> Disability/Disease:	<input type="radio"/> General	<input type="radio"/> Specific:	_____

### SPECIALTY CLIENT GROUPS:

☐ Professional groups—e.g. teachers, military, Boeing, veterans (specify): \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Rural      ☐ Low-Income/uninsured      ☐ Seniors/Medicare Beneficiaries      ☐ Pre-retirement  
☐ Disability/Disease Group(s)(specify): \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Multicultural / English as Second Language (specify language(s) and/or culture(s)): \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:** New Volunteer Applications, SHIBA HelpLine, 810 Third Avenue, Ste. 650, Seattle, WA 98104-1615